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THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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March 19, 1981

IRANIAN BISHOP PUBLISHES BOOK

NEW YORK -- The Seabury Press has announced the April publication of an inside account of the Islamic revolution in Iran by H. B. Dehqani-Tafti, Anglican Bishop in Iran and President Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East.

The Hard Awakening is an autobiographical historical account of Iran during the final days of the Shah, during the violent revolution at the return of the Ayatollah Khomeini, and during the post-revolutionary "reign of terror."

"Thank God we did not know from the beginning what was in store for us as a family and as a Church," the bishop writes, "otherwise I don't think we would have been able to bear it. . . . When the revolution came, we welcomed it. But it was not long before we found that we had exchanged one form of oppression for another even more severe."

In February 1979 the rector of the Anglican Church at Shiraz was murdered. In the summer of that year, Christian hospitals in Isfahan and Shiraz and a church-sponsored blind mission were confiscated by the state. Church documents and many of the bishop's personal belongings were confiscated and burned during a raid on his home.

Word began to reach Dehqani-Tafti of other church workers and priests who were being interrogated, many of them subsequently imprisoned or exiled.

Dehqani-Tafti tells of the personal tragedies he endured at the hands of the new regime: the shooting of his wife, Margaret, in October 1979; the assault on and arrest of his secretary, missionary Jean Waddell -- just recently released from prison in Iran -- in the spring and summer of 1980; and the assassination of his only son, 24-year old Bahram, in May 1980.

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Forced to abandon his Church and to live in exile in England, Dehqani-Tafti says he has accepted these trials as part of God's plan. His faith in God is unbroken, he writes, and he prays for the strength to obey his call from God and to carry on with his work for the Church.

The Hard Awakening is the story of a man who has emerged from a nightmare in which his family and friends were terrorized and his Church destroyed, with a hope for the future and a faith that leads him to beseech God to "Remember. . . and forgive" the plunderers of his nation and the murderers of his son.

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Forced to abandon his Church and to live in exile in England, Daniel-Johnson has
not accepted these trials as part of God's plan. His faith in God is unshaken, he writes,
and he prays for strength to obey his call from God and to carry on with his work for
the Church.

The Great Awakening is the story of a man who has emerged from a nightmare in
which his family and friends were tortured and the Church destroyed, with a hope for the
future and a faith that leads him to become God's "instrument" . . . and to fight for the
future of his nation and the ministers of his age.

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